LEGISLATIVE BUSINESS.

THE TRAVANCORE AGRICULTURAL CREDIT BANK BILL.

Mr. Kayalam Paramesvaran Pillai: Sir, I beg to move that the Travancore Credit Bank Bill as passed by the Assembly be taken into consideration.

Mr. C. V. Chandrasekharan: I second it.

Mr. Kayalam Paramesvaran Pillai: Sir, the object of this Bill is to set up a Bank whose primary function will be to grant long-term loans with a view to the promotion of agriculture, and the starting, carrying on and development of cottage and other suitable industries, or to put it briefly the fostering of agriculture and small industries. That agriculture is not profitable at present in Travancore is a proposition that may perhaps be accepted. It has been stated recently by a high authority that the agriculturist in India has not taken to agriculture as a profession but has adopted it only as a mode of living, and that that is the reason why he does not find agriculture profitable. That may be one of the many reasons. However, having regard to the recent fall in commodity prices and to the cost of manure and other materials required for cultivation, the question of agricultural finance has become somewhat difficult. Sources of credit which were available to the agriculturist till recently are not now available; at any rate, money is not available to the agriculturist at a reasonable rate of interest.

The House will remember that recently a measure was enacted for the working of Co-operative Societies which function on the mutual credit of the members. Such societies may provide short-term loans for the benefit of agriculturists, generally speaking. They cannot obviously provide long-term loans. The House will also remember that it recently enacted another measure for the relief of agriculturists, namely, the Travancore Agriculturists Relief Regulation which has since become law. The distinctive feature of that Regulation was the setting up of Conciliation Boards which were expected to effect conciliation between debtors and creditors and to bring down the debt within the paying capacity of the debtor; and the special feature of this conciliation was that it should be perfectly voluntary that is to say, the debtor should not be compelled to accept any arrangement with the creditor which he is not prepared to accept, and the creditor should not be compelled to

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

[Mr. Kayalam Paramesvaran Pillai.]

accept any scaling down of the dues, or any measure of compromise, which he is not prepared to accept. Now, if the conciliation is to be perfectly voluntary, how is that to be accomplished ? As has been stated on many occasions during the progress of that Bill, some persuasion should be extended to the creditor for his acceptance of the conciliation, for instance, the offer of cash payment for the conciliated amount.

If a cash payment is to be made who is to make it ? Certainly not the commercial banks, for whom to make a long-term loan is not paying, and it is not their function. Some specific mechinery was therefore considered desirable and very often during the debates on that bill it was expressed that some such machinery should be set up to make long term loan to make the conciliation effective. That conciliation cannot be effective unless there be some such machinery, that will finance the agriculturists or that will make the cash payments for the conciliated debts, has been felt also by the conciliation officers appointed by Government. They have reported that it is almost impossible, or rather difficult if not impossible, to make conciliation effective unless there be some entity who will offer cash payment as a method of persuading the creditor to accept the terms that are suggested by the Conciliation officers. That is only natural. This House has expressed that opinion and it is not surprising that the conciliation officers too have expressed that opinion. It has therefore become urgent and very necessary that some institution should be set up that will make long-term loans for the benefit of agriculture including the relief of agricultural indebtedness.

Again, on the question of industry, the House will remember that if agriculture has become less paying now the people of Travancore can be supported only by providing them with some subsidiary occupation on small industries. Government have specifically taken up the policy of facilitating the growth of industries in this country. The House knows very well that the Pallivasal Hydro-Electric Project will very soon supply very cheap power to the people of this country. One of the most essential requisites for the growth of small industries in this State is cheap-power. The other requisites are the supply of raw-materials and the provision of marketing facilities. Finance is required for these and it is necessary that some institutions that will specialise in affording this type of finance for small industries should come into being if the people should make effective the benefits of the facility afforded by Government for the fostering of small industries. This can be done only by some bank as is proposed by this Bill. At the same time let me say that the proposed bank is not intended

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

to be a duplication of the commercial banks or other similar institutions that afford credit now. In fact this bank is not set up in competition with any such bank. I may even say that the existing commercial banks cannot afford that type of credit which is necessary for the growth of agriculture and industry that this Bill is contemplating. In that respect there is more or less a gap in the credit structure of the State and it is that gap that is sought to be filled up by this Bank. I must perhaps at this stage refer to the fact that there are at present certain Regulations which empower or which authorise the Government to make loans, the Agricultural Loans and the Industrial loans which are granted under certain Regulations. In regard to the grant of these loans it has been criticised on the one hand by the people that there are delays in the making of these loans, and perhaps also unpardonable delays in the making of these loans, and that these loans are not forth-coming in adequate measure to meet the wants of the people. On the other hand, Government feel that very often these loans are granted on insufficient grounds and it has been felt very recently that some of these loans have been granted on security which has been found to be very clearly inadequate and insufficient. In view of these complaints it is necessary that there should be the intervention of a special agency, a non-Governmental agency, working on business lines which will not merely advance money for proper purposes intended by the Government but will also through its staff and through its special agencies and affiliations, see to the proper application of the loan granted and the money utilised in the way it is intended namely for the benefit of agriculture and industry. This can be done only by setting up some non-Governmental bank which will work on business lines. At the same time Government feel that such a Bank can work usefully and efficiently only with the co-operation of Government; in other words a bank of this sort can work only with the backing of Government on the one hand and with the control of Government on the other. Firstly, like all banks this bank too has to work on borrowed capital. Banks generally work on deposits which in law is only a borrowed capital. This bank cannot perhaps, attract deposits like the commercial banks as this bank is intended to make long-term loans. Such a bank can work only by the isssue of debentures and making loans with the money so raised by the issue of debentures. Debentures can come in readily only if Government will step in and guarantee the principal and interest on debentures. It is there the Government must come in so that the work of the bank may be successful. That the credit of the Government is high will be admitted by everybody. The object of Government coming into

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

[Mr. Kayalam Parameswaran Pillai.]

the picture is that the credit of the State should be available for finding ample funds for this bank so that the bank may utilise the funds raised on the credit of the Government for the benefit of the people in fostering agriculture and industry.

The second reason why this bank should have Government backing and Government control is that this bank should be given special powers for the recovery of loans granted by it. It cannot be that this bank should go to the courts and submit themselves to the inordinate delays happening in connection with the disposal of suits. It is therefore only necessary that there should be speedy means of recovering the dues and it is proposed by this Bill that this bank's dues should be recovered under summary process available under the Revenue Recovery Regulation. This power cannot be given to a purely private agency. The bank must work under the control of Government and the Government must feel satisfied that it will not abuse such powers. That is another reason why this bank should have the control of Government.

Again, since the bank is set up with the express purpose of benefiting agriculture and industry, it is necessary that we assure ourselves that the bank does not exploit the agriculturists by charging any inordinate rate of interest or by imposing harsh terms. For that reason it is necessary that the bank should be under the control and supervision of Government. Thus on the one hand it will be seen that the bank should be a non-Governmental agency working on business lines and on the other hand it must have the backing of Government and subject to the control of Government. In view of this the bank that is proposed by this Bill is a shareholders' bank; and in this bank the Government propose to come in by taking largely the shares of the bank and by appointing certain directors themselves in the board of management so that the Government may have adequate control and adequate interest in this bank.

It may be interesting in this connection to remind the House that the Agricultural Debt Redemption Committee, the report of which was discussed by this House, recommended a bank of this nature. At page 120 of the Report they state.

> "It is advisable later on to convert the present Land Mortgage Bank which is a purely Governmental institution into a shareholders' Bank of which the Government should hold 50 per cent. of the shares."

This report was placed before the House for discussion and so far as I can remember no adverse comment was made on this proposal of the Committee. It must, therefore, be taken if silence

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

is consent that the proposal of the Committee has received the approval of this House.

Sir, this, in brief, is the general nature of the bank that is proposed to be set up and the reasons for the setting up of the bank. In regard to detailed provisions of the Bill relating to the bank, I am sure the honourable members have read the provisions of the Bill. I will briefly summarise them. The incorporation and share capital of the bank are dealt with in clauses 1 to 14. One hundred rupees is the value of each share. The business which the bank may carry on and the acquisition of business premises and the power of the bank to take over business of the State Land Mortgage Bank are dealt with in clauses 15, 16, and 17 and in Schedule I. It will be noticed from Schedule I that the primary security for any loan is the mortgage of immovable property, but it may be accompanied by other collateral security of movable property or bills or promissory notes or Government securities. It may be mentioned in this connection that the intention of Government is that the existing State Land Mortgage Bank must be taken over by the bank. The existing State Land Mortgage Bank is a department of Government working with funds supplied by Government. When this Bank is set up it will be unnecessary and perhaps profitless to have a duplicate instiution working in the same direction. But it may require some negotiation between the State Land Mortgage Bank and this bank before the details can be settled. It is expected that after the details are satisfactorily settled the working of the State Land Mortgage Bank will be taken over by the proposed bank. The rules for the internal management of the bank and its board are detailed in Schedule II. These rules may be altered by the share holders themselves with the approval of Government. Two share holders and two officials will the nominated by Government as directors on the management. Six will be elected by the share holders and one by the debenture holders. The board will have a chairman approved by Government and also a Secretary. For the first 3 years the Secretary will be appointed by Government themselves. Provision is also made for a Government audit and inspection of the affairs of the bank. As I said a little while ago the amount due to the bank will be recovered under the revenue recovery processes. This is provided for in clauses 23 to 25. Chapter V deals with the issue of debentures by the bank. The bank can issue debentures only with the sanction of Government and not otherwise. Whatever debentures are thus issued by the bank, with the sanction of Government, will carry the guarantee of Government in regard to the principal and interest and it is hoped therefore that it will be possible to raise money by means of debentures. I trust that

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

[Mr Kayalam Paramesvaran Pillai].

this Bill will receive the approval of this House. I may mention that it is the object of Government to make this bank work as early as possible so that no time may be lost in fulfilling the hopes held out at the time of the enactment of the Agriculturists' Debt Relief Regulation.

President: I have received notice of an amendment by Mr. K. R. Elankath. It runs thus:—

> "In view of the importance of the measure and the very short time the Council had for thoroughly studying the original Bill and carefully scrutinising the Bill as passed by the Sri Mulam Assembly, as also for inviting public opinion on the matter I move that the consideration of the Travancore Credit Bank Bill be deferred to the next meeting of the Council to be convened after a month."

In regard to this, I have just to say two things. As a motion for adjournment the member can move it only under Standing Order 27 and with the consent of the President. That consent is now given. The motion also gives certain directions as to the next meeting of the Council. All that is out of order. The only motion that can be made is that the consideration of the Bill be adjourned. If the honourable member wants to make it, he can move it.

Mr. K. R. Elankath: Sir, I move that in view of the importance of the measure and the very short time this Council had

President: I have ruled that the only motion that is permissible is that the consideration be adjourned. The honourable member may use all that he has stated in his amendment as argument. The only motion that can be made is that the consideration be adjourned.

Mr. K.R. Elankath: Sir, I move that the consideration of the Bill be adjourned. Sir, in making this motion I am not unaware of the seriousness of the measure and the fact that, though in an expeditious way, the measure has already been passed by the Assembly.

When it is considered that the question of agricultural indebtedness of the State is not a new one which has come to the notice of Government in the course of a month or two and in view of the fact that it has been impressed upon the Government, on many occasions throughout the last decade by means of reports of various Committees, I would suggest that the consideration of the Bill be delayed for a few days more to make it as perfect and useful as possible. The time for consideration and deliberation of the Bill has been very limited. Although we have opportunities for moving amendments, it does not afford scope to realise the maximum benefit out of the much-needed measure. A small delay in enacting such a measure will not do any harm when we consider the greater advantages of a more thought-out and well-scrutinised legislation.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

The Unemployment Committee which met nearly 10 years ago brought to the pointed attention of Government that a Bank on the lines of the present Land Mortgage Bank should be started. This opinion was subsequently stressed by the other Committees constituted subsequently. The huge indebtedness of the ryots was brought home to Government by the Banking Committee in 1930; The Census Report in 1931, the Economic Depression Enquiry Committee and the Agricultural Debt Redemption Committee—all these committees stressed the need for a well-thought-out measure-a measure which was not to be hastily carried out.

Mr. Kottur Kunjukrishna Pillai: On a point of Order-Sir. The motion is not on the merits of the necessity of an institution like this. I suppose, Sir, that it is a motion for the adjournment of the House and the member, I am afraid, is dealing with the merits of the question.

President: I take it that the member is only making some introductory remarks for impressing on Government the gravity of the business and the necessity for deliberation and postponement of the measure.

Mr. K. R. Elankath: Yes, Sir. It is exactly my purpose. With the kind of long experience the honourable member had in legislative matters I have to submit that.....

President: Mutual compliments will shorten the time available to the honourable member.

Mr. K. R. Elankath: All that I wanted to say was that this is not a matter brought to the notice of Government in a short time say a month ago so that the Government had no other go in view of the urgency of the case but to start a bank on such and such a day. I should not be understood when I say this as trying to impede the progress of a useful bill. The arguments advanced above have been intended to show that there was sufficient time for Government to prepare a draft Bill and publish it for public criticism even long ago. The suffering agriculturists could have been helped even long time back by suggesting more useful remedies and by providing great facilities if the Government really wanted to do so.

Now, Sir, there are two advantages under which we labour. The members had no sufficient time to study the Bill comparatively with the other measures obtaining in British India or even some of the measures before British Indian Legislatures at present for giving more substantial relief to agricultural debtors. The copy of the Bill as passed by the Sri Mulam Assembly was put into our hands only a couple of days ago; that is on Saturday last. After having due deliberations on the subject and after carefully scrutinising how the Bill has been shaped by the Select Committee, as well as the form of final Bill as it emerged from the Assembly, we find that there is much to be desired in the legislation and that we require much more time than were obliged to have. There are

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

[Mr. K. R. Elankat]

many clauses in the Bill which cannot remain unobjected to. Here is a measure giving great power in the hands of the shareholders where the majority of the Directors are non-officials and at the same time the guaranteeing of the debentures by the Government. This aspect has been touched upon by no less a person than the Dewan the head of the administration, in his speech. He had also stated that eventhough the loans in respect of agriculture and industry were granted after a thorough scrutiny of the *bona fides* the work of the departments or sections charged with the work showed that "lamentable failure" in the collection of the loans was the result. The loans were issued by the revenue and industrial authorities after very careful scrutiny of the properties and assets of the applicants. These officers were closely in touch with the applicants in various respects. The share-holder's knowledge or the knowledge of the directors of a share-holder's bank or their agents cannot of course be closer.

President: I am loath to interrupt the honourable member. But except by way of passing references to the provisions, a detailed discussion on them would be out of order in a motion for adjournment.

Mr. K. R. Elankath: Yes, Sir. I only point out that much more time ought to be taken by this House before each clause in the Bill is approved of. Before the Bill could be approved of by the Legislature, whether that happens or no, a day seems to have been fixed for the inauguration of the Bank on a particular day. It is insulting to the members of both the Houses to find from the newspapers that the proposed bank is going to be inaugurated on the 18th March or so even before we got the draft Bill or summons for the Council. It seems to suggest that whether the measure is approved or not by the Legislature, the Government had decided their course and the nature of the institution to be inaugurated.

President: From where did the honourable member get that information?

Mr. K. R. Elankath: I read the news in almost all the leading newspapers.

President: Was that a Government communique?

Mr. K. R. Elankath: It was a piece of A. P. I. News.

President A. P. I. is not Government.

Mr. K. R. Elankath: That being the case, whether the Government would legitimately take us into their confidence or not, only after the whole measure is approved of by the Legislature the inauguration of the bank is to be thought of.

President: I think the honourable member can speak for this House. Let me know from the Law Member whether there was a similar motion for adjournment in the other in respect of the Bank Bill?

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

Mr. Kayalam Paramesvaran Pillai : Not, so far as I know.

President : The honourable member may speak for this House alone as nobody else raised this question in the other House

Mr. K. R. Elankath : So then, my point is that if more time is given it will be advantageous to get the Bill shaped in the best form and to serve the utmost the indebted agriculturists. Therefore both in the interests of the ryots and the people of the State as a whole and for the solvency of the institution which is intended to be inaugurated I suggest that the consideration of the Bill be postponed.

Mr. M. S. Anirudhan : I second it.

Mr Kottur Kunjukrishna Pillai : Sir, I rise to oppose the motion for the adjournment of the consideration of the Bill. I also remember that, whan I am opposing this motion which is a dilatory motion, this House is in this case practically a revising chamber. The Bill has been considered in the Select Committee and elsewhere and has been before the public for a sufficiently long time. When I say that the Bill has to be considered very carefully, and that there was sufficient time for the consideration of the Bill, I am not saying that in the technical sense. But I say that the Bill and the principles contained in it and the object which it seeks to serve have been in the public eye for indeed a very long time. The complaint from the public has been that an institution to finance longterm credit has not been brought into effect as early as it should be. At this time, Sir, I am surprised to find that a representative of the people, a representative of the agricultural interests of the State, coming forward with a dilatory motion to delay the boon which the people are so much in need of. I am not sure whether my honourable friend is aware of the opinion recorded by many Committees such as the Banking Enquiry Committee, Agricultural Debt Redemption Committee, in fact by every Committee that had something to do with the question of agricultural indebtedness and suggest relief measures, that the action proposed in this Bill should be immediately taken by Government to help the ryots.

Mr. Nedumangad R. Kesavan Nair : Is the honourable member aware that all these Committees had specifically stated that in no case, hasty measures should be taken ?

Mr. Kottur Kunjukrishna Pillai : I am not sure whether those Committees thought it their duty to advise this House or anybody else on general principles of action. Even without their recommendations, even for a man of ordinary common sense, it is patent that no action should be hasty.

So, the question before the House is whether this Bill has to be further considered and whether there was reasonable time for a fair consideration of the measure. Moreover, the question for consideration as much as possible and as minutely as possible has not

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

[Mr. Kottur Kunjukrishna Pillai.]

yet arisen. There is no question of haste arising so far as I can see. I think, Sir, that, if it is a dilatory motion, to express the view that the Bill is not wanted, that fact has to be faced squarely and the opposition made clear. I challenge the members who dare to do that to put forward that position before the country. After having confronted with a Bill, in the guise of satisfying the legislative prudery of any friend, let us not forget our duty and responsibility. And, my friend Mr. Elankath hopes to make the wording of the enactment perfect by a month's preparation. I think that without considering the question of the finish of the whole legislation, the matter is more urgent, because, the agriculturist is in urgent need of it. He is steeped in debt. It has been stated and many a time, tears—I mean, crocodile tears have been shed with regard to the indebtedness and sorrowful plight of the agriculturists.

Mr. K. R. Elankath: Is not "crocodile tears" an insinuation? Is it relevant, Sir?

Mr. Kottur Kunjukrishna Pillai: When I stated crocodile tears I never insinuated against anybody. I meant only those people who shed crocodile tears. Whomsoever the cap fits may take it and wear it; others need not.

So then, Sir, there is no question of haste here. This Bill can be considered carefully and voted upon clause by clause. I do not think there is any substantial deviation from ordinary legislation regarding this matter. It is all a question of principle and it has been before the House for indeed a very long time. I am against postponing consideration of the Bill on the ground that we have not had sufficient time to study the Bill. Any other consideration if urged may be worth thinking over. But on the ground that we were not able to study the measure, I think this House will not be justified in asking for time and thus excusing ourselves for not doing our duty which we ought to do.

Mr. G. Narayana Aiyar: Is the member's observation, that this House is only a revising Chamber correct?

President: Technically it is not, because in many matters this House has co-ordinate powers.

Mr. Kottur Kunjukrishna Pillai: I meant only a Second Chamber.

Mr. N. V. Chacko: Sir, I rise to support the motion of Mr. Elankath. It has been stated here that this House is only a revising chamber and that.

President: Now that the question has been raised about revising Chambers, I think it is well if honourable members will remember that this House is a co-ordinating and parallel Chamber. Second Chambers are, no doubt, revising Chambers in the sense in which constitutional jurists use that term.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

Mr. N. V. Chacko: The State Council is here to consider the Bill. It is not enough that the Assembly went through it clause by clause and bestowed its careful attention to it. The Assembly knew that this House also would be considering the Bill. Otherwise, probably the Assembly might have bestowed greater attention to the Bill than they have now done.

Mr. C. V. Chandrasekharan: Sir, on a point of order. Is the honourable member in order in discussing the motives of the honourable members of the Assembly?

President: He is not in order. But when once he has begun to speak of the Assembly, the procedure of that House may be alluded to.

Mr. N. V. Chacko: Even if the Bills to be considered as a boon as was remarked, this House is entitled to get sufficient time to consider it to see if any poison lurks in it. Consideration of the Bill by this House is not like looking a gift horse in the month.

Mr. Nedumangad R. Kesavan Nair: Sir, I rise to support the motion. It is surprising that my honourable friend Mr. Kottur stated that we have got only revising powers in this House so far as this Bill is concerned.

President: I have already stated that in using that expression the honourable member was probably inaccurate and so it is not necessary to go further into the matter.

Mr. Nedumangad R. Kesavan Nair: Sir, the consideration of the Bill may be deferred a short time so that we may consider it in all its aspects. Much has been said about the relief of agricultural indebtedness and that this Bill should be passed at once. Nobody denied the importance of this Bill, or the fact that it is intended to alleviate agricultural indebtedness. In this respect we are all at one with the Government in wishing that this Bill is passed without any further delay. But the question is whether this hurry is justifiable. If my friend Mr. Kunjukrishna Pillai had perused the relevant pages of the reports of the various committees set up by our Government he could have easily seen that such bills should, under no circumstances, be rushed in this manner through the legislature. We ourselves got the bill as finally approved by the Assembly only on the 22nd of this month, that is, 3 days before, and as such we were not able to send up all our amendments. The Bill was considered during the recent session of the Assembly and a Select Committee was appointed which met immediately, say about three or four days before finally the Assembly met once again and at that session the bill was discussed and passed. No doubt we have been waiting from 1929 for some provision to be made to relieve agricultural indebtedness. I know, that the Devadhar Committee on Co-operation, the Unemployment Enquiry Committee, and

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

[Mr. Nedumangad R. Kesavan Nair.]

the Agricultural Debt Redemption Committee, all these Committees were agreed that some provision for ameliorating the condition of the agriculturists should be made and that by the inauguration of a Land Mortgage Bank this need could be supplied. We the representatives of the people in the Assembly and the Council, do realise our responsibility in seeing that the Bill is passed. These are things about which there is no dispute. The only question is about the manner in which the remedy is to be effected. The Government and the people through their representatives in the legislature should join forthwith and consider in detail the measures that should be taken to alleviate agricultural indebtedness. The deliberation should on no account be a hurried one as in the present case. In this Bill what do we find regarding the sections? There is a responsibility taken by Government in the matter of the issue of debentures. That responsibility is that they would offer security for all the debentures issued by the Bank. Should we not consider this in detail? Should we not get the opinion of the electorate in this matter? Should we not ascertain the popular view? Let us see what the Royal Commission on Agriculture says on this matter. The Royal Commission on Agriculture is strongly of the opinion "that land mortgage banks should be organised only after the most careful preliminary enquiry. Efficient management is essential, and unless this is assured no step forward should be taken". Later on they say: "In no circumstances should any attempt be made to hurry such institutions into existence to meet a popular demand". All along, we have been waiting for a Land Mortgage Bank when His Highness the Maharaja graciously gave us an impetus and a boon to the agriculturists by giving a munificent donation of a lakh of rupees for the starting of the Land Mortgage Bank. Why should that be abolished and a new bank be started? Before starting the bank should we not have the necessary statistics? We could not say that we are in a position to determine correctly the indebtedness of the agriculturists. In spite of the various reports submitted by the committees set up by Government we are not in a position to know where we stand. Let us see what these different committees have ascertained. The fundamental difference between them is with regard to the data of indebtedness. The Banking Enquiry Committee says that our total indebtedness is about Rs. 25 crores. The Economic Depression Enquiry Committee says that it is 40 crores. The Census Report says that it is between 16 to 20 crores. And the Agricultural Debt Redemption Committee says that it is between 20 to 25 crores. All these differ. It is clear that we are not in possession of sufficient data to say exactly what the indebtedness of the agriculturists as a whole is.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

Mr. Kottur Kunjukrishna Pillai: May I know from the Member whether the figures given by the Census Report and the Devadhar Committee Report represent the net debt or the aggregate debt of the agriculturists?

Mr. Nedumangad R. Kesavan Nair: The data collected by the Devadhar Committee and the ——

President: The honourable member will confine himself to the subject matter of the motion.

Mr. Nedumangad R. Kesavan Nair: Sir, at any rate it could be seen that the total indebtendness will be not less than 16 crores. Are we going to achieve anything in the direction of releiving this indebtedness by starting a land mortgage bank with a capital of one crore of rupees? What is the defect that is now found in the present Land Mortgage Bank which is doing good business now? Loans to the extent of 12½ lakhs have been disbursed by that bank and the condition of the agriculturist is alleviated to that extent. Sir, we are not now in possession of sufficient data with regard to the indebtedness of the agriculturists nor do we know the opinions of our constituencies in this respect. The advisability or otherwise of establishing a bank as one that is contemplated in the Bill has to be considered in detail. Therefore, my submission is that consideration of the present Bill may lie over. These sugar-coated words like amelioration of the poor agriculturist, his hardships, etc.

Mr. M. K. Ananthasiva Aiyar: Is it the opinion of the honourable member that we can consider the Bill only after we ascertain the total amount of indebtedness of the agriculturists?

President: Yes. That is the honourable member's opinion.

Mr. Nedumangad R. Kesavan Nair: Relevant data must be had before the bill is considered.

Sir, there is no good in saying so much about releiving the agriculturist. Are the Government keen about it? Are there not other things also which could be done at once so that the agriculturist may be releived? Government do not move their little finger in these things. Government are aggravating the hardships of the agriculturists in many other ways. Are not Government persistent in their levy of market tolls? Are not the agriculturists suffering on that score? Several resolutions were passed to the effect that the market tolls should be abolished. In this connection I would add that the P. W. D. tolls should also be abolished so as to enable the agriculturists to bring their commodities from country

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

[Mr. Nedumangad R. Kesavan Nair.]

parts without incurring any expenditure by way of tolls if Government are so keen about the relief of the agriculturists,

Mr. Kochikal P. Balakrishnan Tampi: Is there any clause in this bill regulating country fairs and market tolls?

Mr. Nedumangad R. Kesavan Nair: As the honourable member seems to be quite ignorant of the provisions of the bill I would request you Sir to ask the Secretary to give him a copy of the Bill.

The motion was put to the vote of the House and lost.

Mr. C. V. Chandrasekharan: Sir, I demand a poll.

A poll was taken and the House divided as follows :—

AYES—8.

1	Mr. M. S. Anirudhan	5	Mr. N. V. Chacko
2	,, K. M. Kora	6	,, K. K. Kuruvilla
3	,, K. R. Elenkath	7	,, R. V. Thomas
4	,, Nedumangad R. Kesavan Nair	8	,, T. K. Kittan

NOES—26.

1	Rao Bahadur Rajyasevanirata Dr. N. Kunjan Pillai	14	Mr. P. I. Simon
2	Mr. K. Parameswara Panickar	15	,, Jacob Hassan Yacoob Sait
3	,, Rao Bahadur A. Rengaswami Aiyar	16	,, Kottur Kunjukrishna Pillai
4	,, Kayalam Parameswaran Pillai	17	,, James Fletcher
5	,, C. V. Chandasekharan	18	,, Godavarma Raja
6	,, C. Kumara Das	19	,, V. S. Arumukham Pillai
7	,, K. R. Narayana Aiyar	20	,, Padiyara Joseph Kunju
8	,, James Simson	21	,, A. Eswara Pillai
9	,, S. Sesha Aiyar	22	,, Kochikal P. Balakrishnan Tampi
10	,, K. N. Govindan	23	,, M. K. Ananthasiva Aiyar
11	,, Abdul Rahiman Saheb	24	Mrs. Abernam Gnanasikhamony
12	,, Eric Hall	25	Mr. C. N. Thuppan Nambudiri
13	,, Abdul Tayab Sheik Kaderbhoy	26	,, Kalloor Narayana Pillai

NEUTRALS—3.

1 Mr. T. Mahomed Ismail.
2 ,, M. Govindan.
3 ,, G. Narayana Aiyar.

The motion for adjourment was declared lost.

The motion that the Bill be taken into consideration was then put and carried.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

President : The result of the election of members for the senate is as follows :

Mr. Kochikal P. Balakrishnan Tampi gets 15 votes and Mr. K. K. Kuruvilla gets 12 votes; Mr. Elankath gets 11 votes, Mr. Godavarma Raja gets 8 votes, Mr. Abdur Rahiman Saheb gets 6 votes and Mr. James Fletcher gets 1 vote ; The first two are declared elected.

THE TRAVANCORE AGRICULTURAL CREDIT BANK BILL.

Clauses 1 to 4.

The question whether Clauses 1 to 4 both inclusive of the Bill stand part of it was then put to the vote of the House and passed.

Clauses 1 to 4 was added to the Bill.

Clause 5.

Mr. K. R. Elankath : Sir, I beg to move the following amendment to Clause 5:

> "In sub-clause (1), line 4, substitute the words "twenty five" for "one hundred" and in line 5, substitute the words "one hundred" for "twenty five" and add the following proviso to the sub-clause :— "Provided" that not less than 60 per cent. of the share-holders shall be Travancoreans."

Sir, the main object of this amendment is that as many Travancoreans as possible should be given the opportunity to take up the shares issued by the bank so that the major portion of the benefie that is intended by the establishment of this bank may go to them. Provison is made in the clause for the value of one share being fixed at Rs. 100. If my amendment is accepted, the share value will be reduced to Rs. 25 and at the same time the working capital required for the bank will not in any way be reduced as my further amendment provides for raising the number of shares to be allotted by four times.

Now, Sir, as I have said already, it is the primary concern of every Government that as far as possible a larger number of the people should be given the chance to take up the shares. Otherwise, the chances are that the institutions will go into the hands of outsiders. This is our experience in the case of other concerns which were initiated at the instance of Government.

President : Order, order. The House will now go on with the subject of the adjournment motion.

If the adjournment motion is disposed soon, we shall have some time more to go on with the other clause of the Bill. I should like to know whether honourable members would like to rise at the usual time or sit longer. It all depends upon how many

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly